



### Mary Lou Williams: Jazz Master

*with Ken Kimery, director of the Jazz Masterworks Orchestra*

**Podcast Link:** <http://amhistory.si.edu/thinkfinity/podcast/marylou.mp3>

#### Discussion Questions

The following questions can be used for in-class discussion or short written responses from students after listening to the podcast.

- Why does Ken say that Mary Lou Williams' career as a jazz musician was not typical of other women within the music industry of the time?
- Why were Mary Lou Williams and fellow female artist Ella Fitzgerald able to be so successful in a male dominated industry?
- Who were some of the famous names in jazz history that Mary Lou Williams worked with or influenced?
- Why does Ken say that it is important to learn about the lives, and not just performances, of jazz artists such as Mary Lou Williams and others?

#### Related Resources from the National Museum of American History

- Smithsonian Jazz <http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/>

#### Related Thinkfinity Resources

- Rhythm and Improv, Jazz and Poetry – from ArtsEdge – [http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Rhythm\\_and\\_Improv\\_Jazz\\_Poetry.aspx](http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Rhythm_and_Improv_Jazz_Poetry.aspx)
- Jazz and World War II – from EdSitement - [http://edsitement.neh.gov/view\\_lesson\\_plan.asp?id=379](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=379)

#### Related National Standards for U.S. History (National Center for History in the Schools)

Era 9: Postwar United States (1945-1970s)

1A: The student understands the extent and impact of economic changes in the postwar period.

4A: The student understands the “Second Reconstruction” and its advancement of civil rights.

Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the present)

2D: The student understands contemporary American culture.

**Have your students email their question, comments, and discoveries to [thinkfinity@si.edu](mailto:thinkfinity@si.edu)**

Find this podcast and more at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/podcasts>



Name:

Date:

Period:

Topic:

*Listen to the podcast. Take notes and answer the questions.*

1. Why does Ken say that Mary Lou Williams' career as a jazz musician was not typical of other women within the music industry of the time?
2. Why were Mary Lou Williams and fellow female artist Ella Fitzgerald able to be so successful in a male dominated industry?
3. Who were some of the famous names in jazz history that Mary Lou Williams worked with or influenced?
4. Why does Ken say that it is important to learn about the lives, and not just performances, of jazz artists such as Mary Lou Williams and others?

**Email your questions, comments, and discoveries to [thinkfinity@si.edu](mailto:thinkfinity@si.edu)**

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